

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for determining priorities in a network device having a receiver and a forwarding engine, comprising:
 - receiving first data from the receiver and second data from the forwarding engine, the first and second data relating to a data frame received by the network device;
 - determining whether the first data contains first priority data;
 - assigning a first priority to the data frame based on the first priority data when the first data contains the first priority data;
 - determining, when the first data does not contain the first priority data, whether the second data contains second priority data; [[and]]
 - assigning a second priority to the data frame based on the second priority data when the second data contains the second priority data; and
 - assigning, when the second data does not contain the second priority data, a low priority to the data frame.

2. (canceled)

3. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - merging the first and second data into a register.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 further comprising:

transferring the merged first and second data to an output queue based on the assigned priority.
5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the determining whether the first data contains first priority data includes:

determining whether the first priority data is valid, and

wherein the determining whether the second data contains second priority data includes:

determining whether the second priority data is valid.
6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the first data includes a first field to store validity information, a second field to store a frame pointer, and a third field to store the first priority.
7. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 wherein the second data includes a first field to store validity information, a second field to store a forwarding engine frame pointer, a third field to store forwarding information, and a fourth field to store the second priority.
8. (previously presented) A network device comprising:

a port filter to receive a data frame and generate first data relating to the data frame;

a first logic device to generate second data for the received data frame;
and

a second logic device to receive the first data and the second data, determine whether the first data contains a valid first priority value, assign the valid first priority value to the data frame when the first data contains the valid first priority value, determine, when the first data does not contain a valid first priority value, whether the second data contains a valid second priority value, and assign the valid second priority value to the data frame when the second data contains the valid second priority value.

9. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 wherein the second logic device:

assigns, when the second data does not contain the valid second priority value, a low priority value to the data frame.

10. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 wherein the second logic device:

merges the first and second data into a register.

11. (previously presented) The network device of claim 10 further comprising:

a plurality of output queues associated with different levels of priorities,
and

wherein the second logic device:

transfers the merged first and second data to one of the plurality of
output queues based on the assigned priority value.

12. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 wherein the second
logic device comprises:

a register that is associated with the port filter and stores the first and
second data.

13. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 wherein, when
determining whether the first data contains a valid first priority value and when
determining whether the second data contains a valid second priority value, the second
logic device:

determines that the priority value in the first and second data is valid based
on validity information in the first and second data.

14. (original) The network device of claim 8 wherein the first logic device
includes a forwarding engine.

15. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 further comprising:

a plurality of transmitters to transmit the data frame based on the assigned priority value.

16. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 wherein the first data includes a first field to store validity information, a second field to store a frame pointer, and a third field to store the first priority value.

17. (previously presented) The network device of claim 8 wherein the second data includes a first field to store validity information, a second field to store a frame pointer, a third field to store forwarding information, and a fourth field to store the second priority value.

18. (previously presented) A system for assigning priorities to packets, comprising:

a plurality of receiver modules to receive packets and generate first data relating to the packets;

first logic to generate second data for the packets;

a plurality of registers that corresponds to the receiver modules and stores the first and second data for the packets received by the corresponding receiver modules; and

second logic to determine, for each of the packets, whether the first data includes a priority indication, assign the priority indication to the packet when the first

data includes a priority indication, determine whether the second data includes a priority indication when the first data is determined not to include the priority indication, assign the priority indication from the second data to the packet when the second data is determined to include the priority indication, and assign a low priority indication to the packet when the second data is determined not to include the priority indication.

19. (previously presented) The system of claim 18 wherein the second logic:
transfers the first and second data to an output queue based on the
assigned priority indication.

20. (previously presented) The system of claim 18 further comprising:
a transmitter to transmit the packet based on the assigned priority
indication.